

Raised Bill No. 899
*An Act Implementing the Guarantee of Equal Protection Under the Constitution of the
State for Same Sex Couples*

Judiciary Committee
Hearing Date: March 6, 2009

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee,

My name is Rosemarie Lewis. I reside in Shelton. I will speak on Raised Bill 899. I oppose this bill in its present form and will explain my opposition.

The Supreme Court recently struck down the state's civil union law and ruled that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry. I was present during the debate on the civil union issue and the subsequent vote. I recall that the focus was on the need for fairness in the treatment of same sex couples regarding hospital visiting rights and other privileges denied them because they had no formal standing as couples in the eyes of the law.

A brief summary of the statement of purpose of SB 899 is: "implementing the court's decision and providing for the merger of existing civil unions into marriages." During my reading of the bill, I encountered a section which does not seem to me to apply to the stated purpose of the bill:

Section 17. of this bill repeals Section 46a-81r of the general statutes. What is being repealed here and why? Reading this information, one finds:

"Nothing in sections 4a-60a, 45a-726a, 46a-51, 46a-54, 46a-56, 46a-63, 46a-64b, 46a-65, 46a-67, 46a-68b and 46a-81a to 46a-81q, inclusive, subsection (e) of section 46a-82, subsection (a) of section 46a-83, and sections 46a-86, 46a-89, 46a-90a, 46a-98, 46a-98a and 46a-99 shall be deemed or construed (1) to mean the state of Connecticut condones homosexuality or bisexuality or any equivalent lifestyle, (2) to authorize the promotion of homosexuality or bisexuality in educational institutions or require the teaching in educational institutions of homosexuality or bisexuality as an acceptable lifestyle, (3) to authorize or permit the use of numerical goals or quotas, or other types of affirmative action programs, with respect to homosexuality or bisexuality in the administration or enforcement of the provisions of sections 4a-60a, 45a-726a, 46a-51,

46a-54, 46a-56, 46a-63, 46a-64b, 46a-65, 46a-67, 46a-68b and 46a-81a to 46a-81q, inclusive, subsection (e) of section 46a-82, subsection (a) of section 46a-83, and sections 46a-86, 46a-89, 46a-90a, 46a-98, 46a-98a and 46a-99, (4) to authorize the recognition of or the right of marriage between persons of the same sex, or (5) to establish sexual orientation as a specific and separate cultural classification in society.”

Why repeal all of Section 46a-81r of the general statutes? I acknowledge that the phrase “to authorize the recognition of or the right of marriage between persons of the same sex” fulfills the stated purpose of the bill. Do the proponents of the bill intend, by the abolition of the other sections, to authorize the promotion of homosexuality or bisexuality in education or require that such lifestyles be taught as acceptable? Is the purpose to establish sexual orientation as a specific and separate cultural classification in society? Or will quotas or affirmative action programs be required with respect to homosexuality or bisexuality in certain areas of our culture if this bill goes forward in its present form?

These questions must be answered and the appropriate items must be rescued from repeal before this bill is allowed move forward.

Thank you.

Rosemarie Lewis